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# SERMON

PREACHED BY

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CHAPLAIN OF UNITED SERVICE LODGE, A. F. & A. M.

AT A

## MASONIC SERVICE

HELD AT

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, ESQUIMALT,

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH,  
1898.

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H. P. McDowell, Printer, 28 Broad St.



Text—"Hebrews." III c., 4 v.

"He that built all things is God."

MOST WORSHIPFUL SIR, WORSHIPFUL SIRS, BRETHREN:

IT is with sincere regret that I have to announce that the Bishop of Columbia is unable, through illness, to speak to us to-day. I have been asked, as Chaplain of United Service Lodge to take his place.

In all religious institutions there are affiliated bodies which lay special emphasis on certain truths, and perform special duties; associations for mutual benefit, guilds for deepening the spiritual life.

These are not religions but the handmaids of religion.

A Religious Faith must be based on a revelation from God. Our reasoning faculties cannot prove the existence of God, although as a matter of inference it is almost indisputable.

This fundamental truth, together with the other articles of the faith, which we who are Christians prize above all things, are based on the revelation of himself which God has made by His Son.

The question we will consider this afternoon is this: Is Masonry a Religion or an aid to the Religious Life?

Undoubtedly the latter. It is based on the *volume of the Sacred Law*, the revelation which God has made of Himself to man.

It selects out of that volume certain fundamental truths and it sets forth, illustrates and emphasises these truths in such a manner that they become peculiarly acceptable to men of mature age, of intelligent and thoughtful minds, and above all of pure intentions.

It is careful not to dogmatise on matters which separate the various branches of Christendom from each other, while it unites in one brotherhood those who endeavour to carry out practical precepts of the Divine



Founder of the Christian religion in zeal and sincerity; it points them on to a more complete acceptance of Him, who is the express image of Father in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily.

What then are the fundamental truths on which so much stress is laid? They are contained in the text "He that built all things is God."

Brethren we are not *operative* but *speculative* Masons.

At a very early period men saw the marked resemblance which exists between the constructive works of man and the vast incomprehensible works of God.

There is little doubt but that in mediæval times operative and speculative Masons were *one*.

The old guild books that have come down to us show that the Masonic Craft was governed by religious rules and purified by religious aspirations.

One dominant idea ran through their work as operative and as speculative Masons. The Glory of God, the Divine Architect of the Universe.

They sought to embody in concrete form the imperishable truths which guided the *great architect* in producing His Mighty Works. Their ideal has never been equalled, never surpassed in subsequent times.

A vital truth was impressed on every detail of construction and intricacy of plan; it characterised every aspect of the completed edifice.

If you scrutinise their work, as happily may still be done in Europe, you will find an almost perfect adaptation of means to ends, and a most marvellous elaboration of detail, full of purpose, worthy of the great theme which these buildings were intended to teach and emphasize

"ALL GLORY TO THE MOST HIGH."

The wonderful results shown in these fabrics of stone and marble impressed men with a deep reverence for the *instruments* by means of which they were achieved. These *instruments* became to them most instructive symbols. For passing from the operative to the speculative side of Masonry they realized that the individual in his *moral* aspect is a builder.



That everyone is bound to develop and improve or to deface and destroy the most important Fact of which the Human Mind is cognisant, viz: *Human Life* expressed in *Human Character*.

Hence to them the instruments of operative Masonry symbolised the means by which the nearest approach to a perfect human character can be developed. For example the Volume of the Sacred Law, that unerring standard of Truth and Justice, teaches the necessity of Rectitude, Strength, Beauty, Faith, Hope, Charity, Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, Virtue, Honor and Mercy.

From operative Masonry were adopted the symbols (so familiar to us all) of these qualities by means of which a perfect Masonic character stands.

"Four square to all the Winds of Heaven."

Beloved by God and revered by man.

But, alas! all Masons are not loyal to the teachings of the Craft, some never take the trouble to realize, much less practise the truths so beautifully symbolised.

Their work is defective, faulty. Men when they build the pillars on the right hand and the left, which uphold the temple of their lives, strong and erect, forget to carve the pomegranates granates and the lily work on the chapiters, the symbols of grace and beauty which so distinguished the temple of Solmon.

There must be truth, and uprightness, there must be justice and strength, there must be wisdom and power in true Masonic character. But with these must be combined the graces of charity and mutual forbearance, brotherly love and self-sacrifice, kindly feeling and gentleness.

Our unfailing resources must be the Sacred Law where we find *knowledge* and *power* to help us in the arduous and difficult process of growing more and more into the *likeness* of the Image of God wherein we were originally formed.

"HE THAT BUILT ALL THINGS IS GOD."

His Master Hand is seen in the wonderful constitution of nature in His masterpiece Man, in the adaptations of means to ends, which are inexplicable except on the

hypothesis of a Master Builder, a great First Cause, (however men may theorise on the evolutionary process, by means of which He brings these mighty things to pass.)

His Hand is seen in the annual provision made for the race, in the objects and joys of family life, in the Providential workings in the affairs of men. "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good."

Brethren, we too in our several spheres are master builders, master Masons. That which God calls by His Spirit "The Temple of the Holy Ghost," the body with its complex constitution is entrusted to us to build up to His Glory and for our good.

Let us ever remember the obligations of our Order, the symbols of which are but as shadows.

Justice and Mercy, Truth and Righteousness, Faith, Hope and Charity.

Your charity, your brotherliness will be put to the test to-day under such conditions that you will have no difficulty at all in responding to the appeal.

Your alms are requested on behalf of the sufferers by fire at New Westminster. As men, as citizens, you have doubtless already responded to the call of charity in some measure. I call upon you now as *Masons* to honour the precepts of our Ancient Order by giving as God has blessed you to this most deserving and most necessitous cause.

No further words, no exhortations of mine are needed, I feel sure, in calling upon you to exercise that virtue which may justly be denominated the distinguishing characteristic of a Free Mason

CHARITY.

